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Capturing the Middle East Recovery

From Labour Export to Contract Export: A Costed, Self-Enforcing National Mission to Operationalise the Exports Pillar of Uraan Pakistan

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SUMMARY

Wars devastate economies, and recovery rewrites economic geography. The relationship between Pakistan and the Gulf is real but asymmetric, grounded in remittances, energy imports, deposits, and goodwill rather than in contracts, firms, and systems. In periods of regional stability, Pakistan breathes, but in periods of instability, the balance of payments, inflation, and external financing tighten. The strategic objective should shift from surviving the Middle East crisis to capitalising on the recovery in the Middle East.

There is much at stake, and much of it can be measured. Reconstruction after conflict in Gaza (US$71bn over five years), Syria (US$216bn) and Lebanon (US$11bn) goes hand in hand with the Gulf region's giga-project pipeline, which includes the ambitious Saudi Vision 2030 program, costing up to US$1.1-1.3tn, and US$1.5tn of unawarded construction projects, the largest in the world. Pakistan earns the wages of its workers but nothing close to the project margin, as exports of goods to the GCC amounted to only US$3.79bn, compared with imports worth US$17.9bn.

> **We send workers; others get projects. We provide manpower; others provide systems. This document translates that sentence into an actionable change.**

This submission does not seek a new strategy, a new council, or a new consultant. This document seeks the Prime Minister's approval of a defined operating model and authorisation to implement it. The model rests on three principles already accepted by the Government: utilise existing institutions (SIFC, BE&OE, NAVTTC, NADRA, TDAP, EXIM Bank, the Foreign Office), not new ones; focus on the individual worker and firm, not aggregates; and engineer irreversibility so that correct institutional behaviour is the path of least resistance via single legal windows, deemed-approval deadlines, performance scorecards, and worker-exit clearance that cannot occur without registration, banking, and insurance.

The decision required of the Prime Minister

1. Designate the SIFC as the nerve centre of a Middle East Recovery Mission with five permanent desks forthwith.
2. Ratify the 90-day activity schedule outlined in Section 6 as binding with designated secretarial owners and a public monthly performance scorecard.
3. Order the four irreversibility mechanisms in the section by proclamation to make sure the reform stands regardless of shifts in staffing or the political cycle.
4. Mandate that all economic benefits flow through transparent, audited contracts to Pakistani firms and workers, with the military responsible only for door-knocking and delivery assurance, not crowding out the private sector.

Implemented as planned, the Mission can realistically achieve US$2–4bn in incremental, debt-free external flows every year starting in Year 3, scaling beyond US$5bn by Year 5. In addition to professionalising the labour corridor that already set a record of delivering a US$42 bn remittance run rate.[1] The ranges and the assumptions behind them are laid out clearly in Section 4.

Importantly, this is not a new agenda but a practical application of Uraan Pakistan. The National Economic Transformation Plan aims to achieve a US$60 bn export target by 2029 and includes manpower, alongside IT, goods, and services, as an export category.[2] This Mission translates the Planning Minister's line into practical deployment, including shipped goods, contract wins, and the protection of remitters. The link is made explicit in Exhibit 1A.

1. The Strategic Window: A Market Pakistan Is Not Pricing into Its Plans

The recovery economy needs exactly what Pakistan has in abundance: construction labour and trades, logistics, food, medical staff, engineers, security and facilities services, modular housing, and, finally, cost-effective defence systems. The constraint has never been comparative advantage; it has been conversion. The following table quantifies the addressable demand from public and named sources and distinguishes firm markets from indicative optionality.

EXHIBIT 1 — ADDRESSABLE DEMAND, BY THEATRE (PUBLIC SOURCES)

Theatre / programme	Size (USD)	Horizon	Status of estimate
Saudi Vision 2030 giga-projects	**$1.1–1.3tn**	to 2030+	Firm — ~$1.5tn unawarded
Syria reconstruction	**$216bn**	10–15 yrs	Firm — World Bank PDNA
Gaza reconstruction	**$71bn**	5 yrs	Firm — WB/UN/EU
Lebanon reconstruction	**$11bn**	3–5 yrs	Firm — World Bank
Iran reconstruction fund (proposed)	~$300bn	TBD	Indicative — press-reported
FIRM ADDRESSABLE DEMAND	**>$1.5tn**	**this decade**	—

Sources: World Bank/UN/EU assessments; Knight Frank and JLL pipeline data; press reports for the Iran fund.[3 4 5 6]

There are two key points of discipline to follow in strategy. First, the Gulf giga-project pipeline, not war reconstruction, represents the greater and more reliable demand; Saudi Arabia alone awarded US$196bn of contracts in 2025. War-theatre reconstruction is real but slower, donor-dependent, and politically gate-controlled. Pakistan needs to focus on the Gulf pipeline and consider Gaza/Syria/Lebanon as an adjacent upside. Second, it will not be possible for Pakistan to win EPC mega-contracts against Chinese, Korean and Western primes. Its only chance lies in certified labour, specialist sub-contracts (MEP, fit-out, facilities management, demining, and modular housing), materials supply, health & IT services, and affordable defence systems, which are precisely what the five desks below point to.

1.SBP / Ministry of Finance; Finance Minister statement, December 2025. FY2025 remittances US$38bn; FY2026 working projection US$42bn. ~US$20bn of July–May FY2026 inflows originated in the Middle East region (Dawn, 11 June 2026).

2.Uraan Pakistan — National Economic Transformation Plan (2024–29), Ministry of Planning, Development & Special Initiatives. 5Es: Exports, E-Pakistan, Environment & Climate, Energy & Infrastructure, Equity & Empowerment. Targets: US$60bn annual exports by 2029 and a trillion-dollar economy by 2035; the Exports pillar explicitly names manpower alongside IT, manufacturing, agriculture, minerals and the blue economy. (uraanpakistan.pk; Business Recorder, Jan 2025.)

3.World Bank / UN / EU, Gaza Interim Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment, April 2026: reconstruction priced above US$71bn over five years (US$35.2bn physical damage; US$22.7bn economic losses).

4.World Bank, Syria Physical Damage and Reconstruction Assessment 2011–2024, 21 Oct 2025: conservative best estimate US$216bn (range US$140–345bn). Lebanon: World Bank, March 2025, US$11bn reconstruction need (US$14bn total economic cost).

5.Knight Frank, Saudi Arabia Giga Projects Report 2025 (Oct 2025): contract awards US$196bn in 2025; western-region giga-projects US$431.3bn announced, US$187.2bn in pipeline. JLL: ~US$1.5tn unawarded pipeline (largest construction market globally). Aggregate Vision 2030 programme estimated US$1.1–1.3tn.

6.Press-reported (Axios, May 2026) proposal for a ~US$300bn Gulf-financed Iran reconstruction fund; unconfirmed and contingent on a final settlement. Treated here as indicative optionality, not a firm market.

EXHIBIT 1A — HOW THE MISSION MAPS ONTO THE 5ES

ALIGNMENT — THIS IS URAAN PAKISTAN, NOT A DETOUR
Every desk advances a pillar the Planning Minister already owns

Exports
Certified manpower, reconstruction goods and specialist sub-contracts are the direct contributors to the export goal of US$60bn by 2029 export and as Uraan classifies manpower as an export, a certified worker counts as export value, rather than a remitter.

E-Pakistan
Pakistan's IT and ITeS exports (11.7% of total exports) are a ready-made solution for Gulf recovery systems-integration, smart-city and health-tech projects; all are routed through the same desks.

Equity & Empowerment
Higher-wage certified jobs, in addition to worker protection and a dignified-return guarantee, reflect Uraan's youth-and-women employment objective and to the "fourth audience" budgets too often ignore: the young Pakistani that craves work and dignity.

Energy & Infrastructure
Gwadar and Karachi positioned as Gulf-recovery logistics nodes, with CPEC Uraan's keystone, as the connecting corridor.

Environment & Climate
Climate change-resistant building material, sustainable logistics, and climate-smart food export would enable the Mission to serve Gulf recovery demands while advancing Uraan's sustainable development agenda.

In one line: the Mission does not ask the Planning Commission to develop a new plan; it asks it to meet an existing target faster.

2. Pakistan's Position Today: Strong Flow, Weak Structure

Pakistan's access to the Gulf via the coast is at once a strength and a vulnerability. Remittances reached a record run-rate in FY2026, posting US$38.1bn in the first eleven months (+9.2%) and a record US$4.3bn in a single month in May, with a full-year forecast near US$42bn (with an estimated US$20bn originating from the Middle East).[7] [8] Yet the structure beneath the flow is shallow: the labour mix is heavily dominated by unskilled categories, exports of goods are a fraction of imports, and Pakistan is capturing practically no project margin.

$42bn	$3.79bn	$17.9bn
FY26 remittance projection	goods exports to GCC (FY25)	goods imports from GCC (FY25)

The labour-mix problem, quantified

In 2025 Pakistan deployed 762,000+ workers abroad, with almost 96% to the GCC, led by Saudi Arabia (530,256).[9] However, the problem is the composition: roughly three in five workers leave as unskilled labour, and fewer than one in twenty as highly skilled or highly educated workers. The skill profiles, not the numbers,

7.State Bank of Pakistan, Workers' Remittances data, May 2026; reported in Dawn and Arab News, 11 June 2026. July–May FY2026 inflows: US$38.1bn (+9.2% y/y); May 2026 a record US$4.3bn.

8.SBP / Ministry of Finance; Finance Minister statement, December 2025. FY2025 remittances US$38bn; FY2026 working projection US$42bn. ~US$20bn of July–May FY2026 inflows originated in the Middle East region (Dawn, 11 June 2026).

9.Bureau of Emigration & Overseas Employment (BE&OE), 2025 migration report (Pakistan Observer, 10 Jan 2026): 762,000+ workers deployed in 2025; 466,062 unskilled, 222,171 skilled, 42,257 semi-skilled, 13,657 highly skilled, 18,352 highly educated. Saudi Arabia 530,256; UAE 52,664; Qatar 68,376; Bahrain 37,726.

EXHIBIT 2 — 2025 LABOUR OUTFLOW BY SKILL CATEGORY

Skill category	Workers (2025)	Share	Recovery relevance
Unskilled labour	466,062	**61.2%**	Low wage; substitutable
Skilled trades	222,171	29.2%	High demand
Semi-skilled	42,257	5.5%	Upgradable
Highly educated	18,352	2.4%	Engineers, health, IT
Highly skilled	13,657	1.8%	Supervisory / specialist
TOTAL	**762,499**	**100%**	–

Sources: Source: Bureau of Emigration & Overseas Employment, 2025 migration report.[10]

The export gap tells the same tale from the perspective of exports. Pakistan's FY2025 exports to the GCC (US$3.79bn) are concentrated in rice, meat, textiles, fruit, and dairy. All product lines in which Pakistan has revealed a comparative advantage but has no formal and structured market-entry machinery. IT and ITeS exports, currently contributing around 11.7% of total exports at an eight-month run-rate of US$2.975bn, demonstrate that Pakistan can move up the value chain through an enabling channel.[11] [12]

FROM THE BUDGET — STABILISED, NOT BUILT
This is the transformation lever the FY2026 budget left on the table

Pakistan's recent fiscal consolidation is not structural but rests on a one-off State Bank windfall of profit and a freeze on provincial development stabilisation that avoids a meltdown but does not, on its own, create jobs or exports. The actual headline statistics are investment-to-GDP (14.4%) and savings-to-GDP (14.1%), both of which remain low for transformation.[13]

The Middle East Recovery Mission is the exact sort of lever the budget is under-used for: it increases exports and non-debt-creating inflows without expanding the fiscal balance and channels migrant savings into productive investment (Exhibit 4A). It is therefore additive to the primary surplus rather than a claim on it. One of those that build is stabilisation, which prevents collapse.

2A. Why Pakistan Is a Credible Recovery Partner

Pakistan's competitive position in the recovery economy rests on five concrete advantages that competitors cannot easily replicate. These are not claims to become a prime contractor; that role belongs to Chinese, Korean, and Western firms. Rather, the aim is to dominate the sub-layer of labour, services, materials, and sub-contracts, where execution costs, cultural fit, and trust determine margins.

Advantage 1: Geographic proximity. Karachi to Riyadh is 2,400 km and 4 hours by air; to Dubai, 1,900 km and 3.5 hours. This is measurably faster than India (3,000+ km, 4.5 hours), Bangladesh (3,500+ km, 6+ hours), or Turkey (4,000+ km, 6+ hours). Where there is time sensitivity in relation to site mobilisation and goods logistics, and any delays result in cost overruns for the project, proximity becomes important. Together, Gwadar Port and Karachi Port offer non-redundant facilities. This advantage is further multiplied: reduced transportation expenses per container, quick labour replacement, and just-in-time materials delivery.

10.Bureau of Emigration & Overseas Employment (BE&OE), 2025 migration report (Pakistan Observer, 10 Jan 2026): 762,000+ workers deployed in 2025; 466,062 unskilled, 222,171 skilled, 42,257 semi-skilled, 13,657 highly skilled, 18,352 highly educated. Saudi Arabia 530,256; UAE 52,664; Qatar 68,376; Bahrain 37,726.

11.SBP trade data via Arab News, 10 Nov 2025: FY2025 exports to GCC US$3.79bn against imports of US$17.9bn. UN COMTRADE 2024: exports to Saudi Arabia US$734m (cereals, meat, textiles); to UAE US$1.76bn. Pakistan–UAE bilateral merchandise trade exceeded US$10bn in FY2024-25 (Gulf News).

12.Pakistan IT & ITeS exports: US$2.975bn in the first eight months of FY2026 (+19.7% y/y), 11.7% of total exports; monthly peak US$437m in December 2025 (PSEB / SBP, reported April 2026).

13.Author's analysis, 'Stabilised, Not Built' (The Pakonomist, June 2026): the FY2026 fiscal position rests on a one-off State Bank profit windfall and a provincial development freeze rather than structural reform; investment-to-GDP ~14.4% and savings-to-GDP ~14.1% are the binding constraints, not the headline growth rate.

Advantage 2: Presence of institutional diaspora. Pakistan maintains 530,000+ workers in Saudi Arabia alone, 52,000+ in UAE, 68,000+ in Qatar, and 37.000+ in Bahrain. This is not the fungibility of labour; it is the employer's familiarity. Gulf contractors are familiar with work discipline, reliability, and cultural orientation in Pakistan. They have recruitment systems, HR relationships, worker cost benchmarks, and performance record histories that extend back for decades. This is a power that cannot be quickly replicated by rivals.

Advantage 3: Labour cost and scalability. While the unskilled-labour export wage (US$2,400/year net remittance) in Pakistan is lower than that of Bangladesh but purely competitive based on cost. The gain is not in unskilled volume, where Pakistan lacks scale, but in certified trades. A certified electrician, HVAC technician, or construction foreman in the Gulf earns between US$5,400 and US$ 7,200/year (net remittance), a 140–200% premium over unskilled workers. Pakistan has scalable, certified trades in place if it implements its certification system.

Advantage 4: Trust premium in Muslim countries. For sensitive projects such as defense infrastructure, critical facilities, and security systems, Gulf governments prefer vendors from Muslim-majority countries with historical strategic alliances. Pakistan's military-to-GCC relationship, security cooperation, and long-standing partnership instil confidence that is unmatched by Western firms or Indian contractors. This trust premium is material for subcontracts in infrastructure and security-related projects.

Advantage 5: Export ecosystem positioning. Currently, Pakistan is exporting rice (US$217m to Saudi Arabia), meat (US$171m+), textiles, fruit, and dairy to the GCC. These have low margins but established market access. The infrastructure boom will drive up demand for cement, rebar, electrical fittings, sanitary ware, and construction materials. Pakistan's cement industry (Dewan, Maple Leaf, Lucky, and Lafarge) is exporting to the Gulf; there is just a need for an integrated supply chain and organised project-linked financing.

The objective is crystal clear: to establish Pakistan as the preferred sub-layer provider for labour, materials, logistics, security services, and information technology services. Not the prime contractor, but the reliable, effective, trustworthy layer beneath the prime.

2B. The Competitive Landscape: Who Pakistan Is Competing Against

The Middle East recovery is not an empty marketplace. It is a fiercely contested field where countries are already mobilised, state-sponsored, and actively lobbying governments, contractors, and sovereign wealth funds in the GCC.

India deploys a 10M+ labour force in the Gulf, monopolises labour-intensive sectors, and has a US$50Bn+ IT services sector that captures all project-related IT and BPO contracts. Similarly, Bangladesh competes directly on labour costs and garment-sector expertise. The Philippines owns healthcare and hospitality labour markets. Furthermore, Turkey delivers EPC projects and has state-sponsored commercial diplomacy (TUREX, EXIM financing). China delivers mega-projects and sells capital equipment. Egypt and Jordan deliver unskilled labour. Pakistan currently captures wages, not margins.

EXHIBIT 2A — COMPETITIVE POSITIONING: LABOUR, SERVICES AND MARKET ENTRY

Competitor	Gulf presence	Strategic advantage	What competitors are doing in GCC	Pakistan's realistic response
India	10m+ diaspora in Gulf; large diaspora; strong presence in IT, services, construction labour and business networks	Scale, diaspora depth, IT/ITeS capability, established firms and political proximity	Uses high-level diplomacy, business councils, diaspora networks and UAE/Saudi partnerships	Do not compete broadly with India in IT scale. Compete in certified trades, food exports, manpower, security-related services and selected low-cost IT niches
Bangladesh	Large labour presence; strong low-cost manpower base; 3.5m+ workers in Saudi Arabia; 1.1m+ workers went abroad in 2025	Low-cost labour supply and manpower scale	Uses labour agreements, recruitment networks and manpower agencies	Move above Bangladesh by offering Gulf-certified skilled trades, better worker protection and higher-wage construction/technical workers
Philippines	2.19m overseas Filipino workers globally; an increase of 1.5% from previous year's estimated number of 2.16m; strong presence in healthcare, hospitality, domestic work and care services	English-speaking workforce, training systems, healthcare/hospitality brand and worker protection reputation	Uses structured overseas employment systems and government-backed worker placement	Do not compete directly in nursing brand immediately. Build construction trades, paramedics, hospital support staff, hospitality, MEP, fit-out, facilities management and worker-protection credibility
Turkey	Major construction and EPC contractor in the Gulf and wider Middle East; 12,478 projects in 137 countries worth US$534.4bn during 1972–2024; Middle East accounts for 25.4% of this volume, roughly US$137.7bn, while Saudi Arabia accounts for 6.3%, around US$33.7bn	EPC execution, engineering capacity, contractor networks and state-backed commercial diplomacy	Uses construction diplomacy, contractor associations, EXIM support and firm-level bidding	Do not compete at prime EPC level. Enter as subcontractor in MEP, fit-out, facilities management, modular housing, materials supply and demining support
China	Dominant in mega-projects, infrastructure, equipment, financing and EPC delivery; major EPC/infrastructure player; US$70.7bn BRI construction contracts in 2024	Capital, SOEs, manufacturing ecosystem and project finance	Uses SOEs, EPC financing, BRI-style packages and contractor-led project delivery	Partner, not compete. Position Pakistani firms as preferred suppliers of labour, materials, logistics, FM and subcontracting to Chinese-led Gulf projects

Source: India-Embassy of India, Riyadh (2026)[14]; Bangladesh-Arab News (2026)[15]; Philippines-PSA (2024)[16]; Turkey-TCA (2025)[17]; China-Green FDC (2024).[18]

The recovery economy will demand those resources that Pakistan has in surplus: construction labour and trades, logistics, food, health workers, engineers, security and facilities services, modular housing and newly affordable defense systems. It is not comparative advantage that has held back growth; it is conversion.

14.India GCC diaspora: Embassy of India, Riyadh, "India-GCC Relations,"

15.Bangladesh workers in Saudi Arabia and 2025 deployment: Arab News

16.Philippines OFW estimate: Philippine Statistics Authority, 2024 Survey on Overseas Filipinos.

17.Turkey contractor data: Turkish Contractors Association, Turkish International Contracting Services 1972–2024.

18.China BRI construction contracts: Green Finance & Development Center / Griffith University, China BRI Investment Report 2024.

2C. International Precedents: How Labour Corridors Become Economic Corridors

The path that Pakistan has proposed is not experimental. Five countries have already executed the transition from labour-export dependency to economic-corridor integration. The mechanisms are identified, the timeline is generational (10-15 years), and the risks are mapped.

Philippines — Governance has generated exportable value. The skills certification and worker-protection reputation introduced by the POEA (Philippine Overseas Employment Administration) and the categorization of the occupations (domestic helpers, nurses, and IT professionals) were created. This enabled OFW remittances (US$35.63bn in 2025)[19] to continue to be sustained while the Philippines made inroads into healthcare services exports, BPO (US$38bn)[20] and IT services in parallel. **Lesson for Pakistan:** governance systems such as certification, protection, and transparency are themselves exportable value and will unlock higher-skill labour categories.

India — Diaspora networks emerged as infrastructure. India's 10+M Gulf community has established trusted employer relationships. These networks have paid for and executed IT services contracts worth US$224bn+ worldwide.[21] Indian firms like TCS, Infosys, and Wipro won major contracts in the GCC, including cloud services, digital transformation, and consulting projects, by leveraging diaspora relationships and engineering capabilities. **Lesson for Pakistan:** Formalised, technically sound, trusted labour networks become a source of power for services and project contracts.

Turkey — State diplomacy conducted contractor strategy. Turkish construction and engineering companies (Enka, Karmod, TAV, Stfa) have secured contracts worth US$136bn[22] cumulatively in Middle East contracts, while Turkey's annual global overseas contracting has been hovering around US$20–30bn in recent years, through state-backed commercial diplomacy, contractor certification and export financing (Turex, EXIM). Turkish labour input is not as high as India or Bangladesh, but Turkish firms perform EPC (engineering, procurement, construction) functions worth a margin, not wages. **Lesson for Pakistan:** state support for commercial diplomacy, contractor certification and export financing are as vital as manpower availability. Pakistan's SIFC model offers this support; the issue is its implementation, as in Turkey.

South Korea— Labour became industrial learning. In the 1970s – 1980s, South Korea sent big teams of skilled workers to the Gulf. Korean companies learned construction, logistics, heavy manufacturing, and project management through labour experience. While labour was flowing out, Korean machinery, vehicles, shipbuilding and petrochemicals were flowing in. By the 1990s, South Korea exited labour exports but entered into exports of capital equipment (LG, Samsung, Hyundai suppliers). The model is still being practiced: South Korea's overseas construction orders reached US$37.11bn[23] in 2024 and US$47.27bn[24] in 2025, while Middle East orders were approximately US$11.9bn in 2025. **Lesson for Pakistan:** labour corridors are not permanent; they establish institutional knowledge and relationships for the export of goods and capital. The window of opportunity for upgrading is generational (10-15 years).

Bangladesh — Scale without upgrading brings dependency. Bangladesh has successfully scaled labour migration primarily to the GCC (8.7M+ labourers exported, US$30.3bn remittances annually, 6.1% of GDP)[25] and is driven by strong garments and worker-cost competitiveness. However, Bangladesh has not yet converted this into persistent exports of goods (beyond apparel) or services exports at scale. **Lesson for Pakistan:** scaling up labour export is necessary but not sufficient. Without parallel institutional investment in certification, project implementation, and exports of goods or services. The gains will continue to be labor-dependent and vulnerable to automation and localization.

19.Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (2025), Overseas Filipino Cash Remittances

20.IBPAP (2025), Philippine IT-BPM Industry Performance 2024

21.Reuters, "Indian Tech Sector Seen Growing 5.1% in FY25, to Cross $300 Billion in FY26, Nasscom Says," February 2025

22.Turkey contractor data: Turkish Contractors Association, Turkish International Contracting Services 1972–2024.

23.AJU Press, "South Korea's Overseas Construction Orders Hit Highest Level in 11 Years," (2026).

24.Yonhap News Agency, "Overseas Construction Orders Hit 11-Year High in 2025," (2026).

25.IOM, Bangladesh Migration Snapshot Report 2024

3. The Operating Model: Five Desks Inside SIFC

SIFC already exists, chaired by the Prime Minister, and is designed to reduce delays, align federal and provincial governments, and accelerate strategic projects. It needs to shift its stance from expecting Gulf investors to come to Pakistan to helping Pakistani firms, workers, and institutions go to the Gulf with structured, bankable offerings. The Mission operates through five standing desks, each with an accountable secretary, a deliverable within 90 days, and a mark on the public scorecard.

EXHIBIT 3 — THE FIVE DESKS: MANDATE, OWNER, 90-DAY DELIVERABLE

Desk	Mandate (uses existing institutions only)	Accountable owner	90-day deliverable
1. Labour & Skills	Gulf Skills Fast-Track: certify, insure, bank-link and register every deploying worker (Gulf Worker ID). Re-weight outflow toward certified trades, and begin the 90%→70% GCC-diversification agenda by opening Germany's skilled-migration pathway (NAVTTC certs are eligible). (NAVTTC, provincial TEVTAs, OEC, BE&OE, NADRA.)	Sec., Overseas Pakistanis & HRD	Live certification pipeline in 6 trades + exit-clearance rule notified
2. Exports & Supply Chains	Gulf Recovery Export Desk solving certification, financing and market access for cement, steel products, sanitary fittings, surgical goods, processed food, rice, meat, pharma, low-cost housing materials — capitalised via a Rs10bn Gulf Export Recovery Fund (EXIM Bank) of 90-day concessional credit guarantees. (TDAP, EXIM Bank, SBP, Customs, ports, commercial counsellors.)	Sec., Commerce	Product-market map + 20 export-ready firms onboarded + first LCs
3. Investment & Contracts	Move from labour export to contract export: a Middle East Recovery Portfolio of firms (construction, MEP, FM, logistics, hospitals, IT) packaged for sub-contract and JV bids. Food-security zones offered as commercial projects, not announcements. (SIFC, BOI, provinces, SOEs.)	SIFC Secretariat	Portfolio of 30 bid-ready firms + 3 food-security project teasers
4. Defence-Industrial	Convert the Saudi Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement and the ~US$13bn pipeline into bankable orders, maintenance, training and JV manufacturing — treated as industrial policy. (POF, PAC Kamra, HIT, GIDS, KSEW, MoDP.)	Sec., Defence Production	JV/maintenance term sheet framework + export-credit structure
5. Migrant Protection	Protect the worker who protects the balance of payments: legal aid, emergency insurance, wage/savings recovery, rapid diplomatic response, deportation contingency. (MOPHRD, Foreign Office, State Life, embassies.)	Sec., Overseas Pakistanis & HRD + FO	Protection cell live in 4 missions + 24-hour grievance line

All institutions listed above continue to exist till today. The Mission does not create any additional institution, any legislation that cannot be made by notification, and any new payroll. It uses existing instruments of the state to their fullest potential.

EXHIBIT 3A — THE MECHANISM THAT TIES DESKS 1 AND 5 TOGETHER

PRIOR FRAMEWORK — REGISTER TO EARN, AT THE BORDER
One credential: the Gulf Worker ID

This Mission builds the author's Register to Earn framework into the migration corridor. Every deployed worker will be issued a one-tap Gulf Worker ID through the existing NADRA / Raast rails, carrying: registration, a benefit wallet (insurance, accident cover, skills voucher), formal remittance account linkage, and a return record.

The same credential ensures the irreversibility lock (without which no one can leave the Protectorate, Section 5), pushes remittances toward formal routes by default, and underpins a Dignified Return Guarantee: any worker deported or evacuated will be accepted, re-registered against their ID, and connected to the right support pathways within 72 hours. One identity object replaces three programmes, and it is designed, not invented.

4. The Numbers: What Each Lever Is Worth, and How It Is Calculated

The figures have been carefully chosen and fully documented with assumptions. They are shown as targets with transparent methodology rather than forecasts. The unit value is not drawn from an official data source; it will be marked up for verification before these values may be quoted in budgets or public statements.

Lever 1 — Labour skill premium (the cleanest, most defensible win)

Mechanism: re-weight the labour outflow from unskilled toward certified-skilled trades. A certified tradesperson earns substantially more than an unskilled labourer in the Gulf. With an indicative net-remittance difference of US$3,000 per worker per year (unskilled US$2,400/yr vs certified-skilled US$5,400/yr): - to be verified against BE&OE protectorate fillings and destination wage board)[26]

EXHIBIT 4 — REMITTANCE UPLIFT FROM SKILLING (ILLUSTRATIVE, CONSERVATIVE)

Year	Cumulative skilled-converted, in-country	Uplift $3,000/worker/yr	Note
Year 1	50,000	**$150m / yr**	pipeline build
Year 2	120,000	**$360m / yr**	cohorts stack
Year 3	230,000	**$690m / yr**	approaching steady state
Year 5 (steady state)	**~330,000**	**~$1.0bn / yr**	recurring

This is in addition to Pakistan's expected FY2026 remittance inflows of about US$42 billion and represents a recurring, non-debt-creating source of foreign exchange. It also minimises risk to automation and localisation in destination markets, which affect low-skill labourers first.

EXHIBIT 4A — TURNING REMITTANCES INTO INVESTMENT

PRIOR FRAMEWORK — FINANCING INSTRUMENT
The Pakistan Development Bond for migrant savers

Remittances increase consumption but too often end up in unproductive real estate investment. To convert the flow into the savings and investment that Pakistan needs very badly, with 14% ratios, the Mission includes a Pakistan Development Bond for the diaspora and returning workers: a 3-year, tax-effective security backed by infrastructure-project receipts, a minimum denomination of US$1,000, and directly subscribable from the Gulf Worker ID wallet.

It is non-external-borrowing in character if it substitutes for foreign borrowing, deepens domestic savings, and channels remittance-backed savings into productive infrastructure, while giving workers a direct stake in the projects supported by the Mission.

Lever 2 — Goods exports to the GCC

Pakistan exports US$3.79bn worth of goods to the GCC against US$17.9bn of imports.[27] An Export Desk with a targeted approach towards realistic growth in the export of products that are currently being exported to the region (rice US$217m and meat US$171m to Saudi Arabia; rice, meat, fruit and textiles to the UAE) along with new construction-materials products (cement, rebar, sanitary fittings). It can raise GCC goods exports by 25–40% over three years, adding US$0.95–1.5bn per year by Year 3. Methodology: Bottom-Up by HS line; maximum is absorption for each line; target subject to TDAP product market mapping (Desk 2, Day-30 deliverable).

Lever 3 — Contract export (sub-contracts, services, JVs)

If Pakistani firms capture even 0.25–0.50% of US$300bn worth of reconstruction contracts plus a thin slice of the Gulf pipeline over five years through MEP, fit-out, facilities management, demining, modular housing, logistics and IT would be an additional US$0.75–1.5bn of contract revenue over the period, starting from a low base. This is the most significant structural change because it earns margin, not just wages, and develops firm-capability. It is shown as a target to be captured, not a forecast.

Lever 4 — Defense-industrial

A tracked pipeline of US$13bn worth of projects and reported contracts above US$10bn in 2024–25 already exists; the national ambition is US$20bn/yr by 2030.[28] Desk 4's aim is not to invent demand but to translate the Saudi strategic agreement and ongoing negotiations into financed orders, maintenance and JV manufacturing, thereby generating US$2–3bn/yr from the pipeline as recovery-linked defense expenditure rises. The numbers are based on the press reports.

EXHIBIT 5 — CONSOLIDATED INCREMENTAL EXTERNAL INFLOWS (CONSERVATIVE)

Lever	Year 3 incremental / yr	Basis
Remittances (skilling)	**$0.45–1.0bn**	per-worker differential
Goods exports	**$0.95–1.5bn**	HS-line bottom-up
Contract export	**$0.3–0.5bn**	capture-rate target
Defense-industrial	**$2.0–3.0bn**	pipeline conversion
INDICATIVE TOTAL	**$2–4bn / yr**	**scaling >$5bn by Yr 5**

Ranges are additive but conservative; defence is already partly in train and is shown for completeness. None of these inflows is debt-creating, which is what makes the Mission IMF-programme compatible.

4A. Provincial and Regional Economic Gains

The Middle East Recovery Mission provides geographically distributed economic gains rather than concentrating in a single province or city. This geographic distribution improves political economy and implementation feasibility because the Mission is not only a technocratic initiative but also a vehicle of provincial and regional gain.

26.Methodology note: remittance uplift uses a per-worker skilled-vs-unskilled differential of ~US$3,000/year (assumes unskilled net remittance ~US$2,400/yr vs certified-skilled ~US$5,400/yr). These wage points are indicative and MUST be verified against BE&OE Protectorate wage filings and destination-country wage boards before publication or budgeting.

27.SBP trade data via Arab News, 10 Nov 2025: FY2025 exports to GCC US$3.79bn against imports of US$17.9bn. UN COMTRADE 2024: exports to Saudi Arabia US$734m (cereals, meat, textiles); to UAE US$1.76bn. Pakistan–UAE bilateral merchandise trade exceeded US$10bn in FY2024-25 (Gulf News).

28.KASB Securities report (ProPakistani / Asia Times, Jan 2026): tracked defence-export pipeline ~US$13bn; >US$10bn in contracts reported signed in 2024–25; national target US$20bn/yr by 2030. Pakistan–Saudi Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement signed late 2025. Figures are press-reported and indicative.

EXHIBIT 4B — PROVINCIAL ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION IN THE RECOVERY MISSION

Province / Region	Core role in Recovery Mission	Primary opportunities	Secondary opportunities
Punjab	Labour, industry, IT and export base	Worker recruitment and certification; Lahore, Multan and Bahawalpur as recruitment hubs; cement, sanitary fittings, rebar, IT/BPO services; Sialkot sports goods, cutlery and auto-parts	Rice, meat and fruit processing
Sindh	Port, logistics and export gateway	Karachi Port logistics, container handling, export warehousing, goods consolidation, re-export, Karachi IT corridor, BE&OE clearance, pharmaceuticals and medical exports	Import substitution in cement, steel and chemicals
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	Labour supply and skills upgrading hub	Skilled-trade training, NAVTTC centres in Peshawar and Swat, construction labour, marble and stone, cement, light manufacturing	Dried fruits and agricultural machinery
Balochistan	Gwadar-linked logistics and resource base	Gwadar port operations, stevedoring, container handling, logistics, warehousing and cold storage	Minerals and natural resources for Gulf infrastructure demand
Gilgit-Baltistan & AJK	High-remittance, skills-focused regions	Skills certification and higher-wage labour mobility	Targeted remittance uplift and worker protection
Islamabad Capital Region	Federal coordination and digital backbone	SIFC coordination, NADRA processing, Protectorate functions, IT and telecom services	Policy monitoring and inter-agency coordination

The political-economy significance is far-reaching. The fact that the Mission creates opportunities across labour, goods, services, logistics and port operations. It will become a vehicle of national rather than regional interest. Provincial governments would have obvious implementation roles: labour departments can help certify workers, Chambers of Commerce can assist with export linkages, and industrial bodies can find material suppliers. This broad provincial interest is considerable and helps in making the case for continued institutional involvement.

5. Irreversibility Engineering: Making the Reform Survive Politics

Pakistan is not lacking in strategies but strategies that are locked in. Four such mechanisms have been integrated in the Mission to ensure that correct behaviour is the dominant strategy and remove discretion from the points where reforms typically fail. Each passes the implementation Test: it can be verified by a district-office or embassy visit, timed with a stopwatch.

1. **Single legal window + deemed approval.** All Recovery clearances (worker certification, export documentation, firm registration) pass through one SIFC window with a hard statutory clock. Failure to deliver any clearance by the deadline will result in the approval being deemed granted. This makes bureaucracy inefficient at extracting rents, since it becomes a burden on the gatekeeper.

2. **Exit clearance is impossible without registration, banking, and insurance.** A worker will never be allowed to leave the protectorate without being NADRA-registered, bank-linked (Raast/account), and insured. Worker Protection and formalisation will become automatic rather than aspirational. This is done deliberately to bring remittances into formal channels.

3. **A public monthly scorecard.** The live SIFC dashboard reports on workers' certification, contract wins, HS line exports, and grievance resolution on a monthly basis. The dashboard creates its own constituency of exporters, provinces and workers who will come to the Mission's defense when they see their numbers and makes backsliding publicly visible

4. **Performance-tied mandate and postings.** Every desk maintains its budget and powers contingent on meeting 90-day targets, while the postings of commercial counsellors depend on converting leads into sales. Power flows after performance, not seniority.

> **A reform that requires political will is a wishful thinking. A reform that makes the right action the easy action is a system. That is what this mission is all about.**

6. The 90-Day Implementation Schedule (Approve-and-Order)

This is the action plan. This document is structured in such a way that the approval from the Prime Minister constitutes the launch of operations. Each point is an independent and owned action that produces verifiable output. No consultancy needed before getting started.

EXHIBIT 6 — DAY-BY-DAY ACTIVITY SCHEDULE

When	Owner	Activity (small, specific)	Verifiable output
Day 0	PM Secretariat	Issue notification designating SIFC as Middle East Recovery Mission command centre; name five desk secretaries.	Signed notification
Day 7	SIFC Secretariat	Stand up single legal window; publish the deemed-approval clock for each clearance type.	Window live; SOP published
Day 7	MOPHRD + NADRA	Notify exit-clearance rule: no clearance without registration + bank link + insurance.	Rule notified
Day 15	NAVTTC + TEVTAs	Select 6 priority trades (electrician, welder, plumber, HVAC, heavy-machinery operator, paramedic/nurse aide); align curricula to Gulf certification.	Curriculum map signed
Day 15	TDAP	Deliver HS-line product-market map for GCC reconstruction goods (priority 12 lines).	Map circulated
Day 30	EXIM Bank + SBP	Capitalise the Rs10bn Gulf Export Recovery Fund; publish export-credit and credit-insurance terms for Recovery exporters and contractors.	Fund live; term sheet published
Day 30	SIFC + provinces	Compile Middle East Recovery Portfolio: 30 bid-ready firms across construction, MEP, FM, logistics, health, IT.	Portfolio v1
Day 45	Foreign Office	Re-task commercial counsellors in KSA/UAE/Qatar to recovery mandate; open migrant-protection cells in 4 missions + 24-hr line.	Cells live; line active
Day 45	MoDP + SOEs	Draft JV/maintenance/training term-sheet framework under the Saudi defence agreement.	Framework drafted
Day 60	All desks	Launch the public monthly scorecard (workers certified, contracts, exports, grievances).	Dashboard live
Day 60	Commerce + Customs	First financed export consignments under new LCs; first 3 food-security project teasers issued.	Shipments + teasers
Day 90	SIFC Secretariat	First quarterly review against targets; renew or reassign desk mandates by performance.	Review minute + scorecard

7. Governance, Political Economy and Risk

Who benefits, who resists

Effective policy names its constituency and its resistance. Beneficiaries: skilled workers (high wages, protection), SMEs and exporters (financing and access to markets), provinces (project pipeline) and defense SOEs (order books). Resistance: informal recruitment agents who profit from the traditional migration system of unskilled labour; intermediaries who profit from delays; and government bureaucrats who lose their discretionary powers due to the 'one-window' and 'deemed approval' clock. It is specifically these mechanisms that the measures in Section 5 are designed to circumvent.

The military's role — door-opener, not crowd-out

Gulf-related linkages and capabilities within Pakistan's military institutions are long-standing and have real delivery capability (training, logistics, engineering, medical, demining, security infrastructure). They are advantages in a place where reliability matters. The governing principle, nevertheless, has to be clear: the military opens the door and enables execution where national capability is required; it does not crowd out the private sector. All economic benefits flow through transparent, competitively awarded, AGP/PIFRA-auditable contracts to Pakistani firms and labour. The defense-industrial cooperation is viewed through the lens of an industrial policy, with export finance not as off-book diplomacy.

IMF-programme compatibility

All the flows in Section 4 are export-, services- or remittance-driven and non-debt creating. The Mission builds investment and savings capabilities, not borrowing ability, which is highly pertinent given the low level of investment as a share of GDP, at a multi-decade low of 13.8%, and is thus entirely consistent with, not contrary to, the Fund programme.[29]

> **The Middle East will rebuild. The only question is whether Pakistan participates in rebuilding the region — with workers, firms, food, services and systems — or stands aside as just a borrower rather than a partner.**

Sources & Methodology Notes

All quantitative claims are footnoted to public releases (numbered throughout). Primary sources: State Bank of Pakistan; Bureau of Emigration & Overseas Employment; World Bank / UN / EU damage-and-needs assessments for Gaza, Syria and Lebanon; Knight Frank and JLL Gulf construction-pipeline data; UN COMTRADE bilateral trade; KASB Securities (defence pipeline, press-reported); the U.S. State Department 2025 Investment Climate Statement; and the Ministry of Planning's Uraan Pakistan / 5Es plan.[30] The Mission's framing draws on the author's prior published work — 'Stabilised, Not Built' (budget analysis), the Register to Earn worker-identity architecture, and the 90%→70% GCC-diversification agenda — cited here as the intellectual lineage of the proposal.[31]

29.Investment-to-GDP fell to ~13.1% in 2024, a multi-decade low (U.S. State Dept 2025 Investment Climate Statement). FX reserves rose from ~US$4.4bn (early 2023) to ~US$14.5bn (June 2025), ~2.5 months of import cover.

30.Uraan Pakistan — National Economic Transformation Plan (2024–29), Ministry of Planning, Development & Special Initiatives. 5Es: Exports, E-Pakistan, Environment & Climate, Energy & Infrastructure, Equity & Empowerment. Targets: US$60bn annual exports by 2029 and a trillion-dollar economy by 2035; the Exports pillar explicitly names manpower alongside IT, manufacturing, agriculture, minerals and the blue economy. (uraanpakistan.pk; Business Recorder, Jan 2025.)

31.Author's analysis, 'Stabilised, Not Built' (The Pakonomist, June 2026): the FY2026 fiscal position rests on a one-off State Bank profit windfall and a provincial development freeze rather than structural reform; investment-to-GDP ~14.4% and savings-to-GDP ~14.1% are the binding constraints, not the headline growth rate.

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